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Workplace Bullying in Higher Education: What Chairpersons Need to Know

Jared Rawlings

The University Of Utah, j.rawlings@utah.edu

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Title: Workplace Bullying in Higher Education: What Chairpersons Need to Know

Presentation Theme: Working with Faculty and Administration

Presentation Type: Best Practice Presentation (45 minutes)

Abstract (25-50 words):

Workplace bullying behavior exists in higher education and the purpose of this session is to present current research about bullying behaviors, explain the impact of bullying between and among populations (faculty and staff), explicate legal and ethical issues, and model practices for academic chairpersons to address bullying behaviors.

Keywords: Five (5) keywords about your presentation. These are used to help participants search for sessions in the conference proceedings.

Workplace Bullying, Higher Education, Faculty, Support Staff, Incivility

Overview (300-500 words):

We all know bullying occurs on children's playgrounds, inside the school building, and even within the adult workplace; however, what about the academy? In 2008, approximately 31% of educators in higher education reported being victims of workplace bullying from administration (McKay et al., 2008). Workplace bullying in academia differs from workplace bullying in other settings. When the bullies in academia have tenure, the perpetrators have job security and seniority over others. Unique from the traditional examples of workplace bullying, which include harsh criticism and social isolation, bullying in academia challenges the educator's access to success. As academic chairpersons, we must protect each educator's access to success and understand how to prevent workplace bullying. In this interactive session, participants will see and discuss current research about bullying behaviors, explain the impact of bullying between and among populations (faculty, administration, and staff), explicate legal and ethical issues, and model practices for academic chairpersons to address bullying behaviors. This presentation will include advice related to faculty development, mitigating conflicts, initiating new programs and working with higher administration.

Relevance of session to chairpersons:

Given the purpose of the conference, along with the related themes (Leadership and Management, Working with Faculty and Administration and Operating the Department), this session is relevant to all chairpersons. Newly-appointed and experienced chairpersons will benefit from this presentation as the information presented will provide them information, guidance, and recommendations related to their position.

Presentation focus:

This presentation will focus on disseminating empirical evidence about workplace bullying unique to academia and strategies for prevention. Participants will be able to experience the content through small group collaboration and demonstration of prevention strategies.

Recommendations for chairpersons:

Overall, the purpose of this session is twofold: (1) to provide new chairs with information, guidance, and recommendations for addressing workplace bullying in their jobs and (2) to allow participants to work with each other to share experiences and practice prevention strategies.

How the audience will be involved:

Session participants will be actively engaged throughout the presentation, both with each other and with the presenter. Although there will be formal information presented, the overall structure will encourage an ongoing dialog within the presentation. Additionally, participants will be asked to work with each other to share their experiences and prominent takeaways from the presentation.